Save the Children

EARLY LITERACY AND MATHS INITIATIVE (ELMI) ENDLINE ASSESSMENT JUNE 2015

ABOUT ELMI

The Early Literacy and Maths Initiative (ELMI) is an innovative project implemented by Save the Children in partnership with VSO through the financial support of the DFID-Innovation for Education fund (IfE). ELMI aims to improve children's school readiness skills for children aged 3 to 6 years through centre-based and home-based interventions.

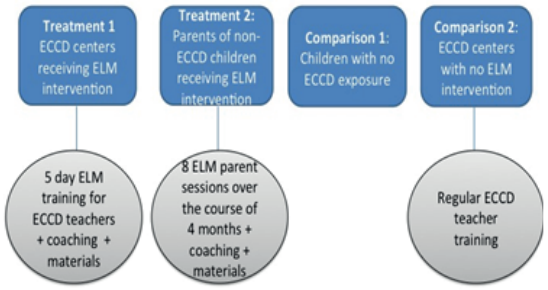
ELMI EVALUATION TIMELINE:

A baseline was conducted in May 2013. The midline assessment was carried out in September 2014 and the endline was conducted in May 2015, when children were in the 2nd term of primary school.

THE SAMPLING

The assessment was carried out across 2 treatment groups (ELMI centre and ELMI parenting) and 2 control groups (ECCD control and Non-ECCD control). Overall 439 children were assessed at baseline, midline and endline (out of an original sample of 833 children at baseline, some could not be located at midline; at endline children were found in P1, P2 and some had dropped out of P1 or were still in an ECCD Centre)

SUMMARY OF INTERVENTION AND COM-



LOCATION:

Burera District: Gitovu Sector (5 ELMI Centres); Cyeru Sector (28 parenting groups); Rwerere Sector (Non-ECCD Control); Rugengabari Sector (4 ECCD control centres).

Rubavu District: Rubavu Sector (5 ELMI Centres); Rugerero Sector (40 parenting groups); Nyamyumba Sector (Non-ECCD control).

Ruhango District: Mwendo Sector (5 ELMI Centres); Byimana Sector (50 parenting groups); Ruhango Sector (Non-ECCD control).

Gicumbi District: Rubaya Sector (5 ELMI Centres); Cyumba Sector (Non-ECCD control)

KEY FINDINGS FROM THE ENDLINE

- *Children in the ELMI Centre and ELMI Parenting groups showed statistically higher scores at endline on both literacy and maths compared to children in the Non-ECCD control group.*
- *Children in the ELMI parenting group caught up almost entirely with their ELMI ECCD peers, despite having the lowest baseline scores across all groups.*
- *Not only do the ELMI Centre and Parenting programmes produce strong learning gains on average, but these interventions are benefitting all families and children equally, regardless of socioeconomic status.*
- *The ELMI Parenting component was much less resource intensive yet have produced almost the same gains as the ECCD Centre programme.*
- *The ELMI Parenting group continued to gain skills between midline and endline at a higher rate than the rest of the groups which points to the continued value that parenting support can bring to children's ELM skills development.*
- *Children who attend high quality ECCD centres were not only better prepared for P1, but also retained their advantage into P1 and had doubled the gains of their peers who attended low quality ECCD centres.*

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INSTRUMENTS

The endline data intended to measure the children's scores in literacy and maths after entering primary school. Thus, instruments employed in the study included tools that have been used in the baseline and midline assessments, as well as some new tools. Tools designed to measure P1 classroom quality were included at endline due to the strong links found between ECCD classroom quality and child development scores in the midline assessment. For the child assessment some items were dropped because they were no longer developmentally appropriate for the children in the study. Some more advanced literacy and maths items were added as well as observations measuring approaches to learning.

Figure 1. *Summary early learning gains from baseline to endline, by group*

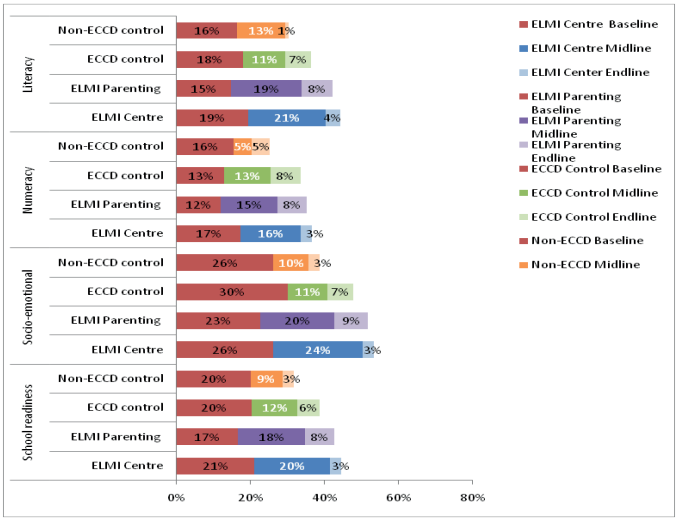

Figure 1 *shows that children in the ELMI Centre and ELMI Parenting groups showed statistically significantly higher scores at endline compared to children in the Non-ECCD control group. ELMI Centre children made significantly stronger gains than children in the ECCD comparison group, controlling for baseline scores. ELMI parenting children started off lowest across all groups on all domains and over time caught up almost entirely with ELMI ECCD peers, closing the gap from baseline; they also continued to gain skills between midline and endline at a higher rate than the rest of the groups.*

Figure 2*. Summary early learning gains from baseline to endline, by group*

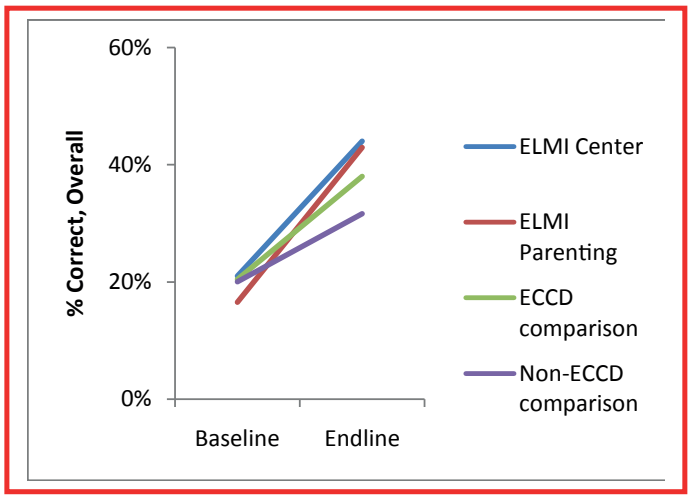

Figure 2 *shows that although the non-ECCD control group had more or less the same starting point as the ELMI Centre group, over time we see them falling further behind. This clearly shows that the gap between them and their ECCD counterparts is widening as children enter the formal school system.*

Figure 3. *Learning gain differences by socioeconomic status*

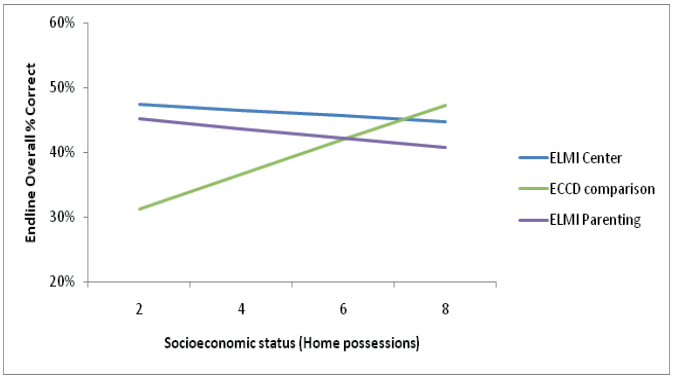

Figure 3 *shows that almost no key background characteristics (i.e., age, gender, mother education, socioeconomic status, and home learning environment (HLE)) is significantly related to learning gains for children in the ELMI Centre or ELMI Parenting groups. This suggests that not only do the ELMI Centre and Parenting programs produce strong learning gains on average, but also that these interventions are benefitting all families and children equally. In contrast, analyses find that after controlling for the background characteristics listed above girls in the ECCD Centre comparison group learn significantly less than boys in all skill areas. Also, within the ECCD Centre comparison group children with higher socioeconomic status are learning more than their peers with fewer family resources.*

Figure 4*. ECERS Midline scores predicting learning gains from midline to endline: ELMI Centre only*

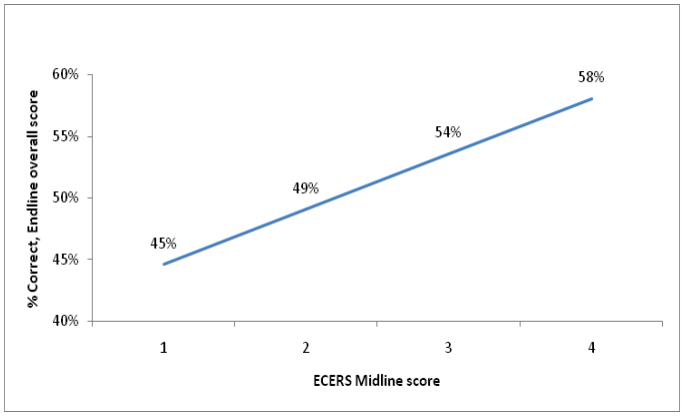

Figure 4 *looks back at ECCD centre quality at midline, and shows that we see a continued significant relationship between higher Quality of Learning Environment scores at midline and stronger overall learning gains from midline to endline for ELMI Centre children. This suggests that children who attended high quality ECCD centres were not only better prepared for Grade 1, but also retained their advantage into Grade 1 and had double the gains of their peers who attended low quality ECCD centres.*